

Claims:

Claims 1-6 (Canceled).

7. (Withdrawn) A method for treating female urinary incontinence comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a curved needle-like element defining in part a curved shaft;
- b) attaching a first end of a tape to the needle, the tape having an expandable chamber for receiving fluid therein;
- c) passing the needle and tape into the body;
- d) attaching a second end of the tape to the needle and passing the needle and tape into the body to form a sling around the urethra, whereby the expandable chamber is positioned substantially below the urethra;
- e) leaving the tape implanted in the body; and
- f) adjusting the tape after implantation by injecting fluid into or removing fluid from the expandable chamber to thereby directly increase or decrease support under the urethra.

8. (Withdrawn) A method for treating female urinary incontinence comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a first curved needle-like element defining in part a curved shaft;
- b) attaching a first end of a tape to the needle;
- c) passing the first needle and tape into the body;
- d) attaching a second end of the tape to the first needle or to a second needle-like element defining in part a curved shaft and passing the tape and first or second needle into the body to form a sling around the urethra;
- e) leaving the tape implanted in the body; and
- f) post-surgically injecting a bulking agent into the tape between the tape and urethra, or post-surgically injecting a bulking agent between the tape and the urethra at a location substantially below the urethra and above the vagina.

9. (Canceled)
10. (Withdrawn) A surgical device for treating female urinary stress incontinence comprising:
- a) a substantially flat tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female to provide support to the urethra; and
 - b) an expandable chamber affixed to the tape so that, when the tape is implanted, the expandable chamber is positioned substantially below the urethra and above the vagina, wherein the expandable chamber is expandable by injection of an injectable agent therein, and wherein such expansion directly provides increased support under the urethra.
11. (Withdrawn) The surgical device according to claim 10, wherein the injectable agent is a bulking agent.
12. (Withdrawn) The surgical device according to claim 10, wherein the injectable agent is a fluid.
13. (Withdrawn) The surgical device according to claim 10, wherein the expandable chamber is comprised of a hydrogel.
14. (Previously presented) A surgical instrument for treating female urinary stress incontinence comprising:
- a) a substantially flat, flexible tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female patient to provide support to the urethra, and having a length and a width; and
 - b) a filamentary element that is distinct from and does not form part of the tape, the filamentary element extending along at least a portion of the length of the tape and having a first end affixed to the tape and a second end, the filamentary element passing through the tape at least once, whereby manipulation of the filamentary element increases or decreases tension on the

tape, thereby providing increased or decreased support to the urethra respectively.

15. (Withdrawn) A method for treating female urinary incontinence comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a substantially flat tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female patient to provide support to the urethra;
- b) providing an expandable chamber for accepting a fluid therein affixed to the tape;
- c) implanting the tape and expandable chamber within the female to form a sling around the urethra, so that the expandable chamber is positioned substantially below the urethra and above the vagina;
- d) post-operatively adjusting the sling by injecting fluid into or removing fluid from the expandable chamber to thereby directly increase or decrease respectively support under the urethra.

16. (Withdrawn) A method for treating female urinary incontinence comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a substantially flat, flexible tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female patient to provide support to the urethra, the tape having a width and a length,
- b) providing a filamentary element that is distinct from and does not form part of the tape, the filamentary element extending along at least a portion of the length of the tape, and having a first end affixed to the tape and a second end and passing through the tape at least once; and
- b) manipulating the filamentary element to increase or decrease tension on the tape to thereby increase or decrease respectively support to the urethra.

17. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 16, wherein the filamentary element is a suture.

18. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 16, wherein the filamentary element is positioned substantially along a center of the tape.
19. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 16, wherein the second end of the filamentary element is accessible via the patient's vagina.
20. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 16, wherein the filamentary element is woven [into] through the tape at a plurality of locations.
21. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument according to claim 14, wherein the filamentary element is a suture.
22. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument according to claim 14, wherein the filamentary element is positioned substantially along a center of the tape.
23. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument according to claim 14, wherein the filamentary element is woven through the tape at a plurality of locations.
24. (Previously presented) A surgical instrument for treating female urinary stress incontinence comprising:
- a) a substantially flat, flexible tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female patient to provide support to the urethra, and having a length and a width; and
 - b) a filamentary adjustment element that is distinct from and does not form part of the tape, the filamentary adjustment element extending along at least a portion of the length of the tape and substantially centered relative to the width of the tape, the filamentary adjustment element being affixed to the tape at at least one location, and passing through the tape at least once, whereby manipulation of the filamentary element adjusts the tape to thereby increase or decrease support to the urethra.
25. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument according to claim 24, wherein the filamentary adjustment element is a suture.

26. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument according to claim 24, wherein the filamentary adjustment element extends substantially along the length of the tape that is implanted within the patient.

27. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument according to claim 24, wherein the filamentary adjustment element is positioned to one side of the urethra.

28. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument according to claim 27, further comprising a second filamentary adjustment element that is distinct from and does not form part of the tape, the second filamentary adjustment element extending along a second portion of the length of the tape that is positioned on the other side of the urethra, being substantially centered relative to the width of the tape, and being affixed to the tape at at least one location and passing through the tape at least once.